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UNCLAS YEREVAN 002222

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR G/TIP, DRL AND EUR/CACEN

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: POLICE DETAIN TWO ON SUSPICION OF TRAFFICKING

1. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

POLICE ARRESTING ALLEGED TRAFFICKERS

2. (SBU) Police detained Tigran Rushanyan (nickname - Tigran the Great) on suspicion of trafficking October 4, 2004 at Yerevan's Zvartnots Airport. Press reports claimed that he had recruited and sent eleven women to Turkey to engage in prostitution, charging each of them USD 150. On the same day, police detained 34-year-old Siranush M. on the same suspicion. According to the press this woman recruited and sent prostitutes to the United Arab Emirates during February and March of 2004, allegedly making a profit of USD 1000. The Prosecutor's Office of Yerevan's Malatia-Sebastia region, responsible for both cases, declined to provide additional information on the cases, noting they are still under investigation.

COMMENT: PUBLIC AWARENESS INCREASING

3. (SBU) Press reports, while undoubtedly playing on the sensational aspects of these cases, are nonetheless helping to improve public awareness of the problem of trafficking.
RICHTER